

(b) if so, the target fixed in this regard; and

(c) the number of villages where Village Public Telephones have been installed till March, 2007?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in remaining 66,822 unconnected villages in the country. This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc. As on 31st March, 2007, out of 66,822 unconnected eligible villages, 46,969 villages have been provided with VPT facility and the remaining 19,853 villages will be provided with VPTs progressively by November, 2007.

Houses to poor under VAMBAY in Nagpur

†*419. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of economically weaker people of Nagpur who have been allotted houses so far under 'Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana' (VAMBAY);

(b) whether it is a fact that there are people who have not so far been allotted houses under the said scheme;

(c) if so, the reasons for not allotting houses to such people; and

(d) by when people of very poor economic categories would be allotted houses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) As reported by the Nagpur Municipal Corporation, under the Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY) in Nagpur, construction of 2578 houses has been completed. Out of these, 1467 houses have been handed over to the beneficiaries and 1111 houses are under the process of allotment.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

[3 May, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

(b) to (d) VAMBAY has been subsumed under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), with effect from 3.12.2005. Under two programmes namely, Basic Services to Urban Poor (BSUP)-for 63 Mission cities and Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP)-for non-Mission cities, houses are sanctioned based on project proposals submitted by the State Governments conforming to scheme guidelines. For Nagpur city, 5121 houses have been sanctioned under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) so far.

Slum population in urban cities

*420. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the slum population in urban cities is increasing rapidly with nearly one third of the urban population being poor;

(b) whether Government are also aware that this population is away from basic health facilities compared to rural areas;

(c) if so, the schemes of Government to help poor slum population;

(d) whether there is any specific fund granted to State Governments to improve living condition of slum population and to eradicate poverty that has engulfed them; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) Estimates by Town and Country Planning Organization (TCPO) reveal growth in the slum population in urban areas of the country as under.

Year	Slum Population
1981	26 million
1991	46.2 million
2001	61.8 million

About 23% of the population is estimated to be residing in slums in 2001 as per Slum Census of India.